

# NEWS RELEASE

## DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

Commissioner Claire DeMatteis

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Presented by Deputy Bureau Chief of Prisons, Paul G. Shavack, Public Information Officer

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### DOC Announces Death of JTVCC Inmate

***Smyrna*** - On Thursday, April 16, Joseph S. Russo, a 73-year-old inmate housed at the James T. Vaughn Correctional Center (JTVCC) passed away at Bayhealth Hospital, Kent Campus after complications from multiple underlying health issues.

Joseph S. Russo, 73, was admitted to Bayhealth Hospital, Kent Campus on Monday evening, April 14, 2020 after developing a fever and respiratory symptoms. Preliminary information indicates Russo died of complications from respiratory failure.

Russo had received a proactive COVID-19 test at JTVCC on April 10 as part of the DOC's proactive monitoring of 45 asymptomatic inmates in a minimum security housing unit, including twice daily temperature checks. That COVID-19 test result was negative. After admission to Bayhealth Hospital, Kent Campus, a second COVID-19 test was administered on April 14 and a negative test result was returned from the second test as well. A third COVID-19 test was subsequently administered by Bayhealth staff on April 15, and that result is currently pending from the state public health laboratory.

Russo, of Newark, Delaware, was serving a life sentence for a conviction for Unlawful Sexual Intercourse.

Russo's body has been released to the Delaware Division of Forensic Science.

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